

Saudi recognition of Israel hinges on Palestinian statehood, Washington analysts say

By Anwar Iqbal

WASHINGTON: Will Saudi Arabia recognise Israel before Israel recognises a Palestinian state? That question was already being debated in Washington before Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (MBS) arrived earlier this week — and it continues even after his departure.

Many analysts argue that Saudi Arabia's roadmap hinges on a firm commitment to Palestinian statehood.

“Saudi Arabia can't go forward with normalisation without Israel in effect recognising the Palestinians have the right to a state,” said Hussein Ibish, senior resident scholar at the Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington, speaking to *The New York Times*.

MBS himself told President Trump during his visit: “We want to be part of the Abraham Accords. But we want also to be sure that we secure a clear path to a two-state solution.”

That insistence frames what many view as the red line in any potential Saudi-Israeli normalisation — not merely a diplomatic hurdle, but a condition tied to Riyadh's regional standing and religious stature.

US reliability

The visit followed growing uncertainty in Saudi Arabia and among other US allies in the Middle East about the reliability of American security guarantees. In September, Israel attempted to assassinate senior Hamas officials in Qatar, rattling neighbouring Gulf states, particularly because Qatar's close alli-

ance with the United States did not prevent the operation.

“The Saudis worry about US reliability,” said F. Gregory Gause, professor of international affairs at Texas A&M University. He added that the agreements signed in Washington during the visit “are part of the way to keep us from leaving” Saudi Arabia exposed to a Qatar-like situation.

At a discussion hosted by the Middle East Institute in Washington, Prof Gause further explained how the turbulent regional landscape is shaping Riyadh's foreign-policy calculations and why it seeks a bilateral defence agreement with the United States.

'Too powerful to ignore'

Examining why MBS has returned to what it called “Washington's embrace”, the *NYT* noted that the Saudi leader is now “too powerful to ignore”. At 40, he has cemented his position “not only as the de facto ruler of Saudi Arabia but also as a global political heavyweight — a diplomatic deal-maker who oversees one of the world's largest sovereign wealth funds”.

That mix of political clout and economic ambition shaped how Washington received the crown prince. Over the past decade, MBS has accelerated a sweeping social and economic reform agenda under Vision 2030, aiming to wean the kingdom off oil and build a diversified, globally competitive economy.

Megaprojects such as NEOM, The Line, and the Red Sea schemes are the visible manifestations of that strategy.

“MBS, too, is in a hurry. In the past decade, he has helped transform Saudi Arabia

economically, socially, and politically, but he also realises the need to address some setbacks and lock in momentum for what's ahead. His ambition is to transform his religiously conservative, oil-dependent kingdom into a diversified, globally connected power that will thrive long after hydrocarbons fade,” Frederick Kempe, president and chief executive officer of the Atlantic Council, said.

Kempe added a political dimension to that urgency: “Trump is a man in a hurry to leave a lasting foreign policy legacy,” noting that the Middle East remains one of the president's most consequential opportunities.

Defence ties

Defence cooperation was a central pillar of the visit. Daniel B. Shapiro, a former US ambassador to Israel and Atlantic Council scholar, stressed that Trump's approval of F-35 fighter jets for Saudi Arabia signalled a deeper commitment: “Trump ... is going all-in on the US-Saudi relationship.”

Yet the defence track is not without complications. “China remains an issue in the backdrop of US-Saudi defense relations,” Tressa Guvenov of the Atlantic Council warned. In a series of statements released by the council, Guvenyi noted that “similar efforts to sell F-35s to the UAE were not realized ... in part due to concerns of technology transfer to China.” US intelligence concerns over potential Chinese access to advanced systems continue to shape deliberations in Washington.

Shapiro also highlighted the need to preserve Israel's qualitative military

edge (QME). He noted that the UAE deal had passed a QME review and that the Saudi sale is likely to do so “because Israel will have been flying the F-35 for a decade and a half before the first Saudi plane is delivered, and Israel will have nearly seventy-five F-35s by then.” He added that, unlike past cases, “it appears there is no link to Saudi normalization” in this deal — and that MBS's insistence on “a clear path” to a Palestinian state signals “a potential disparity from Saudi Arabia's previous stance requiring the ‘establishment’ of a Palestinian state.”

Beyond security, the visit was also about investment. Washington is pressing Riyadh to nearly double Saudi US investments — particularly in AI, technology, and energy — with MBS positioning the kingdom's sovereign wealth fund as the vehicle for that push. The IMF's 2025 Article IV consultation praised Saudi Arabia's “strong resilience to shocks,” noting expanding non-oil activity, contained inflation, and record-low unemployment, while urging continued structural reform to sustain growth.

For US policymakers, the payoff is clear: a Saudi partner that is economically strong, technologically advanced, and more disposed to diplomacy. For Riyadh, however, any march toward normalization will be measured against the litmus test MBS has set — Palestinian statehood.

Frederick Kempe summed up the political tempo: both leaders are racing to secure legacies. Trump seeks a foreign-policy signature; MBS seeks to lock in momentum for a transformed, globally connected Saudi Arabia that can thrive long after oil's dominance fades.

RSF condemns raid on Kashmir Times offices

KARACHI: Celia Mercier, head of the South Asia desk of Reporters Without Borders (RSF), has condemned the raid on the offices of the *Kashmir Times* in India-occupied Jammu.

The RSF said in a press statement that the attack on one of the few independent media outlets in occupied Kashmir was unacceptable, calling for charges against the newspaper and its editor-in-chief to be dropped.

Agents from held Kashmir's State Investigation Agency (SIA), accompanied by police, searched the premises of the *Kashmir Times* on Thursday. According to RSF, the agents seized documents and computers even though the newspaper's offices have been out of use since 2021.

The SIA reportedly filed an FIR against Anuradha Bhasin, the editor-in-chief, claiming that she and the media outlet had shared content which is a “threat to India's sovereignty and integrity”. Anuradha Bhasin currently lives abroad. She told RSF that she was not informed about any legal proceedings against her.

The *Kashmir Times*, an independent English-language newspaper, was founded in 1954. Recognised as a leading source of information about India-occupied Kashmir, it has been a target of repeated attacks in recent years.

“The *Kashmir Times* is a recurring target of the authorities in a context of increased repression of the media in Jammu and Kashmir, a region that has become a virtual black hole as far as information is concerned since its autonomy was revoked in 2019,” the RSF said in its statement.

“RSF condemns the punitive targeting of an independent media outlet and a fabricated case designed to silence one of the few critical voices that continues to cover (occupied) Kashmir.”

“We call on the Indian authorities to put an end to this harassment and drop the false charges against the media outlet and its editor-in-chief.”

Anuradha Bhasin said in her reaction to the raid: “The reported raids on our office, the baseless accusations of activities ‘inimical to the state’, and the coordinated crackdown on the *Kashmir Times* are yet another attempt to silence us.

“We have received no official intimation or statement to confirm the official actions. Our office, where the media reports suggest the raids took place, was out of operation for the last four years. The bizarre allegations against us are baseless.”

In 2019, the Indian government withdrew its advertisements from the newspaper after the editor challenged in the Supreme Court the 18-month-long internet blackout imposed in occupied Kashmir.

In Oct 2020, its offices in Srinagar were sealed off by the authorities and employees were evicted without notice. The outlet was then forced to suspend its print edition between Oct 2022 and Nov 2023, before relaunching solely online.

Zelensky says he won't end war on Russian terms

A 28-point US plan proposes Kyiv cede parts of Donetsk to Moscow, recognise Crimea and Ukraine's east as ‘Russian’, limit size of its army and agree never to join Nato

KYIV: Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelensky said on Friday he would not “betray” his country as he pushed back on a US plan to end the war on terms favourable to Moscow, acknowledging he risked losing Washington as an ally.

Ukraine faces one of the most challenging moments in its history, Zelensky said in an address to the nation, adding that he would propose “alternatives” to US President Donald Trump's 28-point plan.

Kyiv and its European allies were startled by the proposal, which would effectively force Ukraine to capitulate by giving up land, cutting its army, pledging never to join Nato and holding snap elections.

Russia would not only gain territory but be reintegrated into the global economy and rejoin the G8, under a draft of the plan.

In Moscow, the Kremlin was bullish, threatening Zelensky to negotiate or lose even more territory.

Zelensky said: “I will present arguments, I will persuade, I will propose alternatives.”

Recalling how he marshalled

Kyiv's response to the Russian invasion, he said: “We did not betray Ukraine then, we will not do so now.”

He spoke to US Vice President J. D. Vance on Friday, a source in the Ukrainian president's office said.

And the Ukrainian leader plans to speak directly to Trump in the “coming days”, his office said.

He also held an emergency call with German, French and British leaders as Europe, cut out of the process, also scrambled to respond.

'Most difficult moment'

The US plan envisages recognising Moscow-annexed Crimea and occupied eastern Ukraine as “de facto” Russian, also requiring Kyiv to pull out from parts of the Donetsk region that it still controls.

The front line would be frozen in the southern Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions.

Kyiv would also cap the size of its army to 600,000, rule out ever joining Nato and have no Nato troops deployed to its territory.

In return, it would get unspecified “reliable security guarantees” and a fund for reconstruction using parts of Russia's frozen assets.

Zelensky has made no illusions about how much of a corner Ukraine has been backed into with the proposals.

“Right now is one of the most difficult moments in our history,” Zelensky said in the address to the nation, wearing all black.

“The pressure on Ukraine is one of the hardest. Ukraine may face a very difficult choice: either the loss of dignity or the risk of losing a key

partner,” he said, warning of a complete break with Washington.

'Good plan for both'

Trump's administration has rejected accusations that it worked on the proposal with Moscow, which, in turn, said it had not officially received the draft.

The White House insisted that it was a “good plan” for both Russia and Ukraine.

Zelensky has also sought to rally the support of his key European allies.

Following a call, British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Friedrich Merz stressed their “unwavering and full support for Ukraine on the path to a lasting and just peace”.

The United States bypassed Europe with the plan, with many in the EU unsettled by the prospect of the war ending on Moscow's terms.

Germany's Merz stressed that Ukraine's army “must remain capable of defending itself”.

Berlin said the current front line “remains the starting point for any understanding” - in contrast to the US plan that would immediately hand vast territories to Moscow.

The Kremlin appeared to see victory in the vicinity, either through diplomacy or on the battlefield.

Its spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Zelensky better “negotiate now” or lose more of his country.

“The space for the freedom of decision-making is shrinking for him as territories are lost,” Peskov said.—AFP

Two ‘commanders’ among 13 terrorists killed in KP

Continued from Page 1

wing said.

Seven killed in Bannu

Separately, seven people were killed and two others sustained bullet injuries in an attack when armed men opened fire on

the members of local peace committee in the Kashmir Dray Dareez area of Bannu district on Thursday night, officials said.

“They were present in the guestroom of Abdul Jalil, head of the peace body, when terrorists entered and attacked them,” a local police official said.

Peace or village defence committees have been formed in Bannu and Lakki Marwat districts to protect their areas from terrorist infiltration and attacks. Members of these committees also assist police and other law enforcement agencies in operations against Fitna

al Khwarij.

The family, however, maintained that the attack was the result of a murder enmity, and the suspects have been nominated in the FIR.

According to the FIR registered at Havaid police station, suspects Muhammad Haroon, Shakir alias Maidari and Gul Andaz, along with a dozen armed men led by terrorist commander Sad-iqullah entered the *baithak* (guestroom) of Abdullah and hurled hand grenades, causing the room to catch fire.

The attackers then opened fire on those inside before fleeing.

Abdullah, son of Aadi Nawaz and the complainant in the case, told Havaid police in his initial statement that five people, including two teenagers, were killed on the spot.

The deceased were identified as Osama (24), Sufyan (16), son of Noor Nawaz, Kamran (16), Muhammad Niaz (21), and Waliullah (26). The injured included Sufyan (14), Noman (15), and Muhammad (15).

The bodies and injured were transported to the District Headquarters Hospital, where two of the injured — Sufyan and Noman — died during treatment.

Trade, power plans linked to Kabul

Continued from Page 1

soil,” he said.

Calling this a central “denominator” of ties, Mr Andrabi said the Afghan Taliban must stop backing groups such as FAK, FAH and their affiliates, and prevent Afghan nationals from carrying out attacks inside Pakistan.

“We are cognisant of the losses to Pakistani traders, who are suffering,” he said. “But now we cannot let our people be killed indiscriminately.”

Turkish delegation

The spokesperson said the scheduling of a planned Turkish delegation's visit in connection with the Pakistan-Afghanistan conflict was still awaited, despite Ankara's announcement earlier this month that senior officials would travel to Islamabad for renewed mediation efforts.

The third round of talks between Pakistan and Afghanistan, held under the Turkish-Qatari initiative, ended without an agreement on Nov 7 in Istanbul, leaving the ceasefire fragile amid continued TTP attacks.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan later announced on Nov 9 that a high-level delegation including Foreign

Minister Hakan Fidan, Defence Minister Yasar Guler, and intelligence chief Ibrahim Kalin would visit Islamabad the following week to help secure a lasting ceasefire and work towards reopening trade routes.

Pakistan welcomed Ankara and Doha's “sincere efforts” on Nov 14, but the delegation's arrival is still awaited, amid reports of complexities in the process.

“This visit has not taken place. It is being scheduled. The travel schedules of ministers take time to firm up,” Mr Andrabi said.

He rejected suggestions that Islamabad's lack of cooperation was causing delays. “The delay should not be attributed to any non-cooperation from Pakistan,” he said. “Whether there is any non-cooperation from the Afghan Taliban regime, I am not aware of it.”

The FO spokesperson said it was premature to comment on other mediation proposals, including those from Russia and Iran.

“Many states have offered mediation, and we appreciate the support of our friendly and brotherly countries,” he said.



US PRESIDENT Donald Trump meets New York City's mayor-elect Zohran Mamdani at the White House in Washington. —AFP

Trump says he'll help Mamdani make ‘dreams come true’

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump said on Friday that he had a “very productive meeting” with New York City's mayor-elect Zohran Mamdani.

“We've just had a great... very productive meeting. We have one thing in common. We want this city of ours that we love to do very well,” Trump said in the Oval Office.

“The better he does, the happier I am... And we're going to be helping him to make everybody's dream come true,” Trump said.

Earlier, Trump had predicted the two political opposites would “get along fine” at their first in-person meeting after clashing over everything from immigration to economic policy.

A democratic socialist and little-known state lawmaker who won New York's mayoral race earlier this month, Mamdani requested the sit-down with Trump to discuss cost-of-living issues and public safety.

The Republican president has issued threats to strip federal funding from the biggest US city, while the mayor-elect has regularly criticised a range of Trump's policies, including plans to ramp up immigration enforcement efforts in New York City, where four in ten residents are foreign-born.

The 79-year-old president, a former New York resident, has labelled Mamdani, 34, as a “radical left lunatic”, a communist and “Jew hater”, without offering evidence.

Mamdani has espoused Nordic-style democratic socialism, not communism. While a staunch critic of Israel, he was endorsed by prominent Jewish politicians, is bringing in Jewish staff in his new administration, notably New York police commissioner Jessica Tisch, and has repeatedly condemned antisemitism.

Trump tempered his language on Friday shortly before the mayor-elect's arrival, saying he expected it to be “quite civil” and commending Mamdani for a “successful run”. “I was hitting him a little hard,” Trump told Fox News. “I think we'll get along fine. Look, we're looking for the same thing: we want to make New York strong.”—Reuters



#BankofKhyber

WE ARE HIRING!

Bank of Khyber is seeking applications from highly skilled and experienced candidates for the following positions:

Head – Consumer Finance Division – Retail Banking Group
Location: Head Office – Peshawar
Closing Date: November 28, 2025

Regional Head – Corporate Banking – Corporate & Investment Banking Group
Location: Lahore
Closing Date: November 28, 2025

Area Managers
Location: Islamabad and Baluchistan
Closing Date: November 28, 2025

Branch Managers
Location: Across Pakistan and AJK
Closing Date: December 06, 2025

Relationship Managers – Corporate
Location: Islamabad, Lahore, Karachi, Gujrat, Sialkot, KP and major cities across Pakistan
Closing Date: December 06, 2025

Relationship Managers – Commercial & SME
Location: Islamabad, Lahore, Karachi, Gujrat, Sialkot, KP and major cities across Pakistan
Closing Date: December 06, 2025

Note: The date of Interview will be intimated to shortlisted candidates only. (No TA/DA is admissible for interview). In case the degree is obtained from a foreign University, equivalency certificate from HEC is to be submitted by the candidates at the time of interview to validate the required education.

Interested and eligible candidates may visit our website at www.bok.com.pk/careers for further details regarding job responsibilities and for submission of ONLINE application OR send their Curriculum Vitae along with the Covering Letter to **Head Human Resourcing Division, 5th Floor, BOK HO Tower, 24-The Mall, Peshawar Cantt.**

WOMEN AND PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO APPLY.
BANK OF KHYBER IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER.
ALL CANDIDATES ARE TREATED STRICTLY ON MERIT.



Office of the Executive Engineer (E&M)
GWADAR DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
GOVERNMENT OF BALOCHISTAN (PAKISTAN)
Tel: (92-96) 920 1010-11, Fax: (92-96) 920 1020
Website: www.gda.gov.pk Email: info@gda.gov.pk



TENDER NOTICE

TSE-252611913293

Note: In All Procurements of GOB Whether through Electronic or Manual Bid Submission, it is Mandatory for All Bidders to Get Registered at Electronic Public Procurement System of BPPRA GOB.

The Gwadar Development Authority invites bids from Eligible Bidders for execution of following works for the Year 2025 based on Composite schedule rates 2023 on Percentage & Item Rates.

S.No	Name of Works	Tender Fee	Bid Security
1.	Repair & Maintenance of RGB Lights Gwadar	PKR 1,000	2%

Estimated Cost : 2,528,000

PROCUREMENTS shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules - 2014.

ELIGIBILITY OF BIDDERS:

- Presence in Active Tax Payer List
- The bidding firm must not be blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan
- Balochistan Revenue Authority Registration is required
- The bidder must have completed 2 Assignment of similar nature of work
- Turnover of at least 1,769,600 PKR Amount in 3 subsequent previous years showing financial capacity of the firm
- Registration with Pakistan Engineering council (PEC) C-6 and above (Upto 25 million) in Relevant Category and Specialized Code is EE06 (Specialized Lighting System), EE11 (vi) (General Electrical Works Only), EE11 (viii) (General Electronics Works).

PROCEDURE OF PROCUREMENT:
Single Stage Two Envelope Bidding Procedure

BID SECURITY:
The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of **Bank Guarantee, Deposit at Call of 2%** specified above in the name of the under-signed from a scheduled bank.

TENDER DOCUMENTS:
Tender Documents will be available on Gwadar Development Authority, BPPRA website and also from undersign office. (PKR 1,000/- as applicable tender Fee / bidding documents charges) to be deposited in the head of GDA Accumulated Collection or Fund account **3002-0081-0083-6601** through **Bank Al-Habib Ltd. Gwadar Branch.**

ISSUANCE OF TENDER DOCUMENTS:
From the date of publication of NIT to **09 December, 2025** during office hours on working days

LAST DATE OF BID SUBMISSION:
The Tenders must be submitted latest by **09 December, 2025 till 11:00 AM.**

TENDERS OPENING:
All tenders will be opened on same day at the office of the undersigned at **12:00 PM**

Address: Office of the Executive Engineer (E&M), Gwadar Development Authority, Marine Drive, Gwadar. **Phone no:** 8649201010 **Fax no:** **Email:** info@gda.gov.pk.

Executive Engineer (E&M)

GWADAR DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

GWADAR